

Berta Morena's Elisabeth Not Altogether Satisfactory

Munich Soprano, in a Second Appearance at the Metropolitan Opera-House as the Heroine in "Tannhauser," Not Sufficiently Saint-Like.

BY SYLVESTER RAWLING.

IF Berta Morena's conception of Elisabeth in "Tannhauser," as she disclosed it last night at the Metropolitan Opera-House, is the correct one, we have been nursing a false ideal. No more may we talk of her as "saintly," for never was portrayed a more earthly love. Her meeting with Tannhauser in the Hall of the Minstrels in the Wartburg might have been, for all that, the secret wedding of a pair of lovers with Tristan when King Mark was a witness. Every intonation of her voice, every look of her languishing eyes, every movement of her little body, suggested that she was ready to throw herself into Tannhauser's arms. Of its kind it was admirable, but it was not the kind to which we have been accustomed.

After the beautiful idealism of the Munich soprano's Sieglinde, with its grace, its tenderness and exquisite grace, this impersonation of Elisabeth, too, seemed in its way, was most disappointing. She was only another Venus without the latter's boldness. Her singing of the "Ich lebe dich" for this reason, missed much of its loftiness and aloofness. This true, she made amends by the dignity of her appeal to the Landgrave and the nobles for an end to her life when the latter had outraged them all in his rapacity to the goddess. In the last act, too, her prayer was touching in the simplicity with which she uttered it. But scarcely any exponent of the character fails to score before the storm, and in the Hall of the Minstrels, she sang a melody from out of the heart of a young American's love, and singing would not down.

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